



TH750
Presbyterian History, Theology and Polity
Fall Semester A 2010
Thursdays 1-5 PM
Dr. James Wagner
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

An overview of the history, theology, and polity of churches in the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

KNOWLEDGE	RESEARCH SKILLS
At the end of this course, students will have gained a more comprehensive understanding of the history, theology, and polity of churches in the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition.	At the end of this course, students will have developed skills in reading theological texts with a better understanding of their historical setting and their contemporary relevance to the ongoing theological task.
SPIRITUAL FORMATION	MINISTRY PREPARATION
At the end of this course, students will have a clearer understanding of the meaning of a call to Christian ministry	At the end of this course, students will be better prepared for an ordination exam before Presbytery and the training of officers in a local congregation.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Barth, Karl. *Dogmatics in Outline*. New York: Harper & Row, 1959. LCCN: 59-10343.

Clowney, Edmund P. *Called to the Ministry*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1964. ISBN: 0-87552-144-4.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *Church History, An Essential Guide*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996. ISBN: 0-687-01611-8.

Leadership Training Guide. Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Livonia, MI: 2007.

Longfield, Bradley J. *The Presbyterian Controversy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991. ISBN: 0-19-506419-4.

Machen, J. Gresham. *Christianity and Liberalism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0-8028-6499-4.

The Book of Confessions, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Louisville, Presbyterian Distribution Services, 2002.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

1. Students are expected to read the assigned material for each class and be prepared to discuss it.
2. Two comprehensive written examinations will be given as indicated in the schedule.
3. Each student will write a research paper of ten pages or more on a theme approved by the instructor. The paper will be submitted at the penultimate class session.

GRADING

1. The student's final grade will be determined as follows:
 - a) Successful completion of two comprehensive examinations: 60%
 - b) A research paper on an assigned theme: 20%
 - c) Class participation demonstrating knowledge of assigned material: 20%
2. The 100 points will be broken down according to CEDS' policy concerning letter grades:

	B+ 93 – 94	C+ 83 – 84	D+ 74	
A 97 – 100	B 87 – 92	C 77 – 82	D 71 – 73	F 0 – 69
A- 95 – 96	B- 85 – 86	C- 75 – 76	D- 70	

POLICIES

1. **Attendance.** Each student must attend class and participate in discussion. One absence without penalty will be allowed during the semester. Other absences, except in extreme emergencies, will result in a reduction of grade at the end of the semester. The professor must be notified before the class in case of an emergency. Three tardies equals one absence.
2. **Tardiness.** Classes will begin at the announced time. Because tardiness is disruptive and deprives the professor of valuable teaching time, three (3) late arrivals will be considered an absence and will lower the student's final grade for the course.
3. **Plagiarism.** For written work to demonstrate scholarship and integrity, documentation must be given for all ideas, paraphrasing, and quotations. Failure to do so is viewed as a very serious offense. Any assignment containing plagiarized material will be graded "F" and placed in the student's file. A future occurrence, if determined to be deliberate, will result in dismissal from the divinity school. Cheating in any form will be treated in the same manner as plagiarism.
4. **Written Assignments.** Students are required to use the latest edition of Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* and the *CEDS Research Paper Handbook*. Professors will not accept papers that do not comply with this policy. Proper format, grammar, and spelling will factor into the grade the student receives for the paper. Papers are expected to be submitted on-time, as scheduled by the course professor. All papers are expected to be new work and cannot be submitted twice at CEDS.
5. **Late Work.** All work must be submitted by the due date stated on the SCHEDULE. The professor will not accept late work. All written work must be submitted before the final week of the half-semester. Assignments can be emailed to the professor who will grade them but not print them out and return them. If you must miss class, make arrangements to have your work turned in early. Examinations can not be taken if all course requirements have not been satisfied.
6. **Examinations.** Examinations must be taken at the times scheduled in the syllabus. Postponement of an examination must be requested in writing within two days of the scheduled date of the exam. The request will be considered only in the case of a major emergency (i.e., death in the family or an illness for which you can produce a doctor's statement).
7. **Incomplete.** Students have thirty (30) days from the end of the half-semester to complete work for which they were given an extension by the professor and Director of Student Records. When course requirements are not met in that thirty (30) day period the final grade will be converted to an "F" and counted as hours attempted in computing the grade point average for the half-semester. The request for an extension must be made in writing and include the reasons for which additional time is needed. Requests will not be considered after the seventh week of class. A fee will be charged for the extension if granted.
8. **Withdrawal.** Students must complete the appropriate form when dropping a course. The withdrawal is not official until the professor and the Director of Student Records have signed the form. Courses may not be dropped after the fourth week of classes.

SCHEDULE

Due	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Aug. 19	Overview of Biblical and Church History	Read: Genesis 1-Exodus 20. Read: <i>Church History: An Essential Guide</i> Read: <i>Leadership Training Guide</i> , pp. 1-44	Identify a time line of major biblical events from Abraham to Pentecost. Identify nine major periods of church history and some major events of each period.
Aug. 26	Overview of Presbyterian History	Read: <i>The Presbyterian Controversy</i> , pp.1-127	Class participation on assigned readings
Sept. 2	Overview of Presbyterian History	Read: <i>Christianity and Liberalism</i>	Class participation on assigned readings
Sept. 9	Overview of Presbyterian History	Read: <i>The Presbyterian Controversy</i> , pp. 128-333	Class participation on assigned readings.
Sept. 16	The Faith of the Church Catholic	Read: <i>Dogmatics in Outline</i>	First Exam: Material through Sept. 9 Class participation on assigned readings.
Sept. 23	Overview of the Westminster Confession of Faith and The Shorter Catechism	Read: <i>The Book of Confessions</i> , pp. 117-191 Read: <i>Leadership Training Guide</i> , pp. 45-149	Class participation on assigned readings.
Sept. 30	Presbyterian Polity	Read: <i>Leadership Training Guide</i> , pp. 150-185 Read: <i>Book of Order</i> , Chapters 1-4 (To be Distributed)	Class participation on assigned readings.
Oct. 7	Presbyterian Polity	Read: <i>Book of Order</i> , Chapters 1-4 (To be distributed)	Class participation on assigned readings. Term paper due.
Oct. 14	The Call to Ministry	Read: <i>Called to Ministry</i>	Second Exam: Material From Sept. 16 through October 14.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Consult bibliographical data provided in the assigned texts, especially Gonzalez and Longfield.